

REMARKS

In response to the Office Action mailed February 4, 2008, Applicants sincerely request reconsideration in view of the above claim amendments and the following remarks. Claims 1-28 were presented for examination. Claims 1-28 are currently pending in the application and stand rejected. In response, claim 5 has been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer, and claims 1, 6, 10, 24, 25, and 27 have been amended to clarify the claimed subject matter and correct minor informalities. No new matter is added.

Claims Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. 112

Claims 1-9 and 24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which the applicant regards as the invention.

Applicants respectfully submit that amended independent claims 1-9 and 24 comply with 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph. Therefore, claims 1-9 and 24 are allowable. The amendments to claim 1 are supported by the Specification (e.g. page 13, lines 22-26).

Claims Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. 103

Claims 1-21 and 25-28 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Owners.com, hereinafter “*Owners*”, in view of Raiyani et al. (US Patent App. 2004/0181461), hereinafter “*Raiyani*”. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections.

Amended claim 1 recites a method of assisting real estate sales with automation utilizing verbal communication that includes, *inter alia*, “providing a set of verbal questions to a real estate seller about a real estate listing corresponding to the question data from the voice services node over a voiced call, wherein the question data includes at least one of textual data and a set of pre-recordings, and wherein the set of verbal questions are derived from the question data through text-to-speech conversion if the question data is textual” and “interpreting the received verbal answers to produce listing data through at least one of: speech recognition and natural language understanding.” The amendments are supported by the Specification (Specification: page 7, lines 3-6).

Owners is directed to providing home listing services directly to owners. Specifically, *Owners* provides a marketing tool called Owners Answering Service, which provides buyers with information about a property 24 hours a day when they call the toll free number on the seller's yard sign. However, nowhere does *Owners* disclose interpreting the received verbal answers to produce listing data through speech recognition and/or natural language understanding. As admitted by the Office Action, *Owners* also fails to teach or suggest providing a set of verbal questions to a real estate seller about a real estate listing corresponding to the question data from the voice services node over a voiced call. Moreover, the question data including textual data and/or a set of pre-recordings, where the set of verbal questions are derived from the question data through text-to-speech conversion if the question data is textual, is also not taught or suggested by this reference.

Raiyani discloses multi-modal sales applications, where stored retail data is accessible in a plurality of formats compatible with a plurality of input modalities (*Raiyani*: Abstract; par. 2, 6). While *Raiyani* discusses voice modes and VXML implementations (e.g. par. 109, 111; Please note: the references paragraph 110 appears to be in error), this reference also fails to teach or suggest providing a set of verbal questions to a real estate seller about a real estate listing corresponding to question data from a voice services node over a voiced call, the question data including textual data and/or a set of pre-recordings, where the set of verbal questions are derived from the question data through text-to-speech conversion if the question data is textual. Furthermore, *Raiyani* also fails to disclose interpreting the received verbal answers to produce listing data through speech recognition and/or natural language understanding.

Therefore, *Owners* and *Raiyani*, individually or in combination, fail to teach or suggest several features of amended claim 1, and claim 1 is in condition for allowance. Notice to that effect is respectfully requested. Claims 2-4 and 6-9 depend from amended claim 1 with additional features. Therefore, claims 2-4 and 6-9 are allowable for at least the reasons discussed above for claim 1. Claim 5 has been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer.

Amended claim 10 recites a method of assisting real estate purchases with automation utilizing verbal communication, that includes, *inter alia*, "interpreting the verbal information to produce a query for real estate listing data through at least one of: speech recognition and natural language understanding" and "converting the real estate listing data resulting from the query into

verbal real estate listing information through at least one of: text-to-speech conversion and selection from pre-recordings.” As discussed above, *Owners* and *Raiyani*, individually or in combination, fail to teach at least interpreting the verbal information to produce a query for real estate listing data through speech recognition and/or natural language understanding. The cited references also fail to disclose converting the real estate listing data resulting from the query into verbal real estate listing information through text-to-speech conversion and/or selection from pre-recordings as recited in claim 10. Therefore, amended claim 10 is allowable for at least the reasons described above.

Claims 11-24 depend from claim 10 with additional features such as “wherein the verbal information from the real estate customer identifies a piece of real estate and wherein the query for real estate listing data obtains data relative to the identified piece of real estate”, “wherein the verbal information identifies preferences of the real estate customer, and wherein the query for real estate listing data obtains an identification of one or more pieces of real estate based on the preferences”, and “wherein providing verbal real estate information comprises providing verbal directions to the location of the one or more pieces of real estate.” Claims 11-24 are allowable for at least the reasons discussed above for claim 10 as well as their own additional features.

Amended claim 25 recites a system for assisting real estate sales with automation utilizing verbal communication that includes, *inter alia*, “a voice services node that provides verbal questions based on question data to a real estate seller, receives verbal answers from the real estate seller, and interprets the verbal answers to produce answer data through at least one of: speech recognition and natural language understanding, wherein the question data includes at least one of textual data and a set of pre-recordings, and wherein the set of verbal questions are derived from the question data through text-to-speech conversion if the question data is textual.” As discussed previously, the cited references do not teach or suggest at least interpreting the verbal answers to produce answer data through speech recognition and/or natural language understanding, where the question data includes textual data or a set of pre-recordings, and the set of verbal questions are derived from the question data through text-to-speech conversion if the question data is textual. Thus, claim 25 is allowable over the cited references for at least the same reasons discussed above in conjunction with amended claim 1. Therefore, amended claim

25 and its dependent claim 26 are in condition for allowance and notice to that effect is respectfully requested.

Amended claim 27 recites a system for assisting real estate purchases with automation utilizing verbal communication that includes, *inter alia*, “a voice services node that receives verbal information from a real estate customer, interprets the verbal information to produce query data through at least one of: speech recognition and natural language understanding, and provides verbal responses to the real estate customer based on listing data, wherein the verbal responses are derived from the listing data through at least one of: text-to-speech conversion and selection from pre-recordings.” Once again, *Owners* and *Raiyani* fail to disclose interpreting the verbal information to produce query data through speech recognition and/or natural language understanding or providing verbal responses to the real estate customer based on listing data, where the verbal responses are derived from the listing data through text-to-speech conversion and/or selection from pre-recordings as discussed above in conjunction with claims 1 and 10. Therefore, amended claim 27 and its dependent claim 28 are in condition for allowance for at least the same reasons as described for claims 1 and 10. Notice to that effect is respectfully requested.

Claims 22-24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Owners.com*, hereinafter “*Owners*”, in view of Official Notice. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections.

Claims 22-24 depend from amended independent claim 10 with additional features. As discussed previously, *Owners* even in view of Official Notice fails to teach or suggest several features of the parent claim 10. Therefore, claims 22-24 are also allowable over the cited reference. Notice to that effect is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks all pending claims are believed to be allowable and the application is in condition for allowance. Therefore, a Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested. Should the Examiner have any further issues regarding this application, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned attorney for the applicant at the telephone number provided below.

Respectfully submitted,
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